

Project Scope

Project Name: Blending of flexible delivery into existing programmes, Certificate in Fashion Studies (Level 4) and Certificate in Advanced Fashion Studies (Level 4). Department of Design, Otago Polytechnic.

Date: July 2007

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Project summary

- **Aim**


~~To provide investigation into the development for inclusion of~~ flexible delivery potential within elements of the existing programmes, Certificate in Fashion Studies and Certificate in Advanced Fashion Studies.

- **Outcomes**

“Flexible learning is enabling learners to learn when they want (frequency, timing, duration), how they want (modes of learning), and what they want (that is learners can define what constitutes learning to them)” (Van den Brande, 1993, p. 2).

Development and inclusion of flexible instruction modules within the existing certificate programmes, will allow learner's choices that are adaptable to their different needs through the choice of a varied delivery platform; distance delivery. Not all subject areas taught within the programmes are appropriate to distance delivery (due to the specialised studios they are taught in e.g. Industry Skills taught in a production suite on industrial equipment) so it is envisaged that only subjects where learners are able to participate off-campus will be offered as totally distance options.

It is hoped that this new platform of delivery will attract new learners who are not currently catered for by the existing on-campus programmes. Those that begin to study from a distance may be offered the option to attend block courses in subjects that can only to be taught on-campus, a small number of courses could be delivered as a combination of distance and on-campus, when students have completed theory modules they could attend practical workshops to experience the media. Enabling learners to complete and graduate upgrading their skills and qualifications.

Refer to **Table 1**, * indicates courses that are suitable for distance delivery 

+ indicates courses that are suitable for mix of distance & on-campus delivery

Certificate in Fashion Studies	Certificate in Advanced Fashion Studies
Compulsory Courses	
*Patternmaking 1	*Patternmaking 2
*Garment Construction 1	*Garment Construction 2
*The Design Process	*Fashion Design Project
Industry Skills	
*Observational Drawing	
Elective Courses	
*Textiles	*Advances Textiles
*Drawing for Fashion	+Costume Life Drawing

+ Textile Printing	+Advanced Textile Printing
*Introduction to Footwear Design	+Footwear Construction
*Drawing for Fashion	*Drape
+ Millinery	*Manual Grading
*Accessories	*Digital Media
Machine Knitting	*Techniques for Knits

- **How does the project develop programmes that service existing learners more efficiently?**



Inclusion of flexible delivery modules will benefit existing on-campus learners by enriching the existing programmes, learners with more options to access taught content, such as catch-up and post class revision. Also giving them the opportunity to combine on-campus and off-campus study.


- **How it will help access learners not currently engaged in a programme at Otago Polytechnic?**

Flexible delivery will provide the opportunity for learners not located near the Dunedin campus to access the programme. The broader delivery of course content will also be better suited to a wider audience of differing learning styles. Distance delivery will open up education to non-conventional students, those that prefer not to study within a campus, preferring a varied learning environment, for example at home or with a group of like minded friends. Learners will be more able to schedule courses to accommodate employment and family commitments, perhaps studying outside the present tertiary calendar.



Project background

This project came about in response to an inquiry made by an existing Certificate in Fashion Studies student to continue her study towards a

Certificate in Advanced Fashion Studies through distance learning while living in the UK. Also there has been a further inquiry made by an international tertiary institution interested in distance delivery of content of the certificate programmes. 


Related projects in the organisation





- Flexible delivery strategies are outlined within the Certificate in Advanced Fashion Studies Programme Document.
- Provision has been made within the Department of Design business plan for funding of flexibility delivered course content.
- Block courses within the certificate programmes have been introduced into the course delivery timetable for Semester Two 2007.
- Current Bachelor of Design students access Blackboard and shared department files for course information and revision.
- The Interactive Multimedia Development Programme which has links with the Department of Design is actively exploring the possibilities of flexible delivery of courses within the Bachelor of Interactive Multimedia Development


Details about the scope of the project - what and who will be involved, and how.


- **Strategies and methods**


What would a more flexible instructional module for the certificate programmes look like? The existing instructional components of each course will need to be shaped to allow more flexibility of delivery. Dividing base instructional components of the certificate programmes into eight categorized units following the Nikolova & Collis model (1998). Table 2. Displays what would be involved in the development of a more flexible delivery of the existing programmes.

Table 2. Transfer of existing certificate programmes into more flexible delivery options 

Existing instructional components	Variants reflecting flexibility
1. Lesson presentation and demonstration by the instructor. Face-to-face sessions, printed handout notes	Recorded presentations and demonstrations, printed/electronic notes 
2. One-on-one communication between instructor and learner	Electronic chat, telephone, e-mail, arranged face-to-face, post
3. Group discussions 	Electronic conferencing, telephone conferencing, online discussion boards
4. Individual study, reading and following prepared exercises	Printed material, www resource, exercise kits, interactive video
5. Individual production, making a project or report	After instruction learner negotiates the topic
6. Group projects where each member of the group contributes	Collaboration via post, telephone conferencing, computer network, online discussion board 
7. Being tested on what has been learned	Performance assessment (report, problem solving project) portfolio assessment-workbook, outcome 

8.Feedback from instructor	Remote via post, e-mail, electronic chat, telephone, arranged face-to-face 
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Employing this framework or one very similar would suggest how each instructional component of the existing courses could be shaped. This transfer to flexible delivery would need to be initiated by the present lecturers in each subject area. Development of teaching resources from on-campus to flexible delivery would require the help of department staff with appropriate technical skills. 

It is envisaged that only a small number of modules would be developed initially to test the market, if there is a good response from potential learners then further course could be introduced. 

- **Pedagogy on which the design is based** 

The importance of developing sound pedagogy will be considered through identification of the learning preferences of the target group and matching of instructional methods appropriate for off campus learning environments. The overall design of flexible delivery course will be based on the organization and implementation of the existing certificate programmes, with the additional considerations of how the potential distance learners are likely to be affected by the altered deliver formats of the course content and their individual learning environments.

- **Personnel**

It is envisaged that existing teaching staff on these certificate programmes will deliver the new modules. Development of the distance delivery courses will require the conversion of existing teaching resource into a flexible format (recording of practical demonstrations for delivery onto CDROMs/Department

web site, adaptation of hard copy notes, Blackboard / Department website set-up, promotional material for the public domain such as YouTube. THIS IN Administration staff will also be required to dispatch, record and return information and assignments to and from students.

Learner and Graduate profiles

- **What are the characteristics they come with and the tools they learn with?**

Certificate studies “provide opportunities to those who are already working in the fashion industry or wish to move into it either at a junior level or in their own business, those who wish to prepare for application to a degree programme and those who are studying for interest only” (Programme Document, 2006, p 1).

In addition these potential students will need to be independent highly motivated and focused learners who prefer self-paced instruction and can work well alone on course projects



Tools

Learning resources and tools required to partake in the modules will include computer based resources, such as access to the Internet preferably Broadband and basic computer skills. Equipment specific to the chosen course e.g. sewing machine and overlocker for Garment Construction.




- **What will they need to leave with?**

“Graduates from these programmes will have attained a recognised qualification suitable for entry to careers within the fashion design and manufacturing industry” (Programme Document, 2006, p.3).


Learners who partake in the offered flexibly delivered modules may continue their studies to complete the course, and others offer within the department on-campus.

Possible issues and considerations

- **Access to course materials and technologies**

Students will be delivered the same course content that is presently delivered on-campus, authentic learning experiences, based on experimentation and action. They will be directed to participate in a variety of activities, such as critical thinking, problem solving through experimentation, group discussions, recording of process and self evaluation. Content will only vary in media format when compared with the on-campus courses. dia formats such as videoed practical demonstrations, backed up by comprehensive notes and diagrams that can be assess either digitally or hard copy. Face-to face interaction with both the lecturer and fellow students will be replaced by on-line discussion boards on either Blackboard or department website this could be in the form of written links or a visual/audio format such as ~~Scope~~ . Not forgetting the telephone. 

The Polytechnic Bill Robinson Library and University of Otago Libraries are accessible to all enrolled students, these offer inter-loan and database facilities, which can be assessed by distance learners.

Learners may also be able to assess Otago Polytechnic Community Learning Centres to complete computer orientation course requirements. 

- **Interaction with each other and the teacher - what communication methods will work best and why?**

Telematics will play an important role in the delivery of these modules, as mentioned above learners will have synchronous and asynchronous (one-to-one and one-to-many) communications with the lecturer and other learners through computers and telephones. Perhaps even face-to-face on campus if this is achievable. Assessment will be required to be returned to lecturers for marking this will be achieved either via, courier or digital formats. The majority of hand-ins will need the physical responses that are returned for marking e.g. samples from given exercises and completed garments for Garment Construction.

- **Learning styles and preferences**

Majority of Certificate in Fashion students demonstrate Behavioural learning preferences they are identified as; active, sensing, visual and sequential learners. Based on the Fielder and Silverman (1988) model. This reflects the inherent nature of the fashion industry, which revolves around constant change, sensory perceptions and visual images (Crutsinger, Knight & Kinley, 2005, p.275).

Active learners tend to process information through trying things out, bouncing ideas off other learners.

Sensory learners perceive and understand information through facts, observation and structure.

Visual learners prefer to have information presented through images, diagrams, video and demonstrations.

Sequential learners absorb information and acquire understanding in small connected pieces, while working towards grasping the broad context of their learning (Crutsinger, Knight & Kinley, 2005, pg. 269-270).

Certificate students learn through discovery based learning, filled by stimulus that is provided within the course content, along with step-by-step

guidelines, this is then interpreted by students through personal response problem solving.

- **Formats for learning materials**

Echoing existing learning materials for the certificate programmes a variety of instructional tools including comprehensive illustrated notes will be available to students both in hard copy (posted) and PDF formats. Instructional components of the modules will be delivered on video, as high resolution CDROMs, podcasts or online. Interactive communication will take place within discussion boards on either/or Blackboard or a department website which can be accessed by enrolled students and staff. Experimentation kits containing all the materials required to undertake taught tasks can be posted out.

- **Difficulties and problems which may arise**

- The development of print-based, online and digital material will come at a cost, this conversion of teaching resources will also be time consuming and require skilled technicians.
- Good infrastructure systems must be in place to support electronic communications, plus students must have access to the Internet.
- Communication via post can introduce delays especially international services.
- Administration and learner support systems need to be geared to off-campus students.
- Academic staff development may be required to assist with the adapting of teaching techniques, for the flexible modules to succeed.

Overall this project would bring new opportunities and challenges for both educators and students.

References

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Authorisation to proceed to funding application:

Head of Department sign: date:

Project Leader sign: date:

Educational Development sign: date: